

THE SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC

Ministry of Information

**STATEMENT OF THE
NATIONAL LEADERSHIP**

of

The Arab Ba'ath Socialist Party

THE EIGHTH NATIONAL CONGRESS

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**Statement of the National leadership of the
Ba'ath Arab Socialist Party Issued at the
conclusion of the Eighth National Congress
of the Party.**

The 8th National Congress of the Baath Arab Socialist party convened in an atmosphere of faith and optimism-faith in the basic principles by which our party originated as a national revolutionary and socialist movement. All members came to the congress with great expectations anticipating the best possible outcome for a future that promises prosperity to the Arab nation through the party's principles. March 8th revolution was the luminous dawn of the future of the Arab nation.

The 8th National Congress with its faithful youth, discussions, deliberations and resolutions that were conducted and endorsed during the congress emphasized the party's democratic method and laid down comprehensive plans that are bound to serve the interests of the Arab nation. Satis-

faction thus prevails among our revolutionary vanguard who, in the name of the Arab people everywhere, work hard to remove barriers that forcibly existed, suppress powers of exploitation and liberate the Arab nation from all fetters that hamper its development and bar it from an earnest contribution to progress, which is sought by all humanity.

Analysis of the Iraki Set-back

In the forefront of the subjects discussed by the party's National Congress was the study made of a report submitted by the national leadership in implementation of a decision taken at the 7th National-Congress that demanded evaluation of the Irak Set-back together with a study of its causes and effects.

The report, in a brief introduction, surveyed the party's establishment and development in Irak. It recalled the party's struggle side by side with the people against colonial pacts besides its struggle against the old reactionary regimes and economic exploitation. The introduction, however, expressed the nature of such stage of strife and the mistakes to which it becomes liable, which mistakes would develop later on and cause the regime to be branded with them.

The report, after the introduction, brought to

focus the genuine meaning of the Ramadan 14 Revolution. That Revolution which liberated the Iraqi masses from fetters that chained them. Thus the masses in Iraq came to the front ranks of those that deal with political and economic destinies.

Ramadan 14 revolution, directed severe blows to the reactionary, bourgeois, and feudal ranks besides suppressing the anti-Arab feeling that dominated Iraq in the regime of Abdul-Karim Kasim. It was distinguished as a revolution that activated masses in the Arab world and restored self-confidence to those masses whose confidence was shaken by Syria's secession from the union. Thus Ramadan 18 revolution in Iraq sparked March 8 revolution in Syria and moved Arab masses in the whole Arab world.

The report exposed the Iraqi experiment to autogenous criticism then outlined factors that caused the set-back as the following :-

- 1 — Lack of an earnest study concerning the economic and social structure in Iraq.

- 2 — Opposed mentalities that prevailed in the party's ranks and extended from stages of struggle to the ruling-stage.

- 3 — Experience shortcomings in the party's cadre.

4 — Irak leadership's failure to undertake the party's responsibilities and the over-indulgence of same in affairs of government which of course resulted in a gap between masses (base) and the leadership (top).

5 — Complete negligence of the military establishment organization.

6 — A disregard of the party's basic principles in taking measures and replacement of same by personal judgements; in addition to selfdelusion.

7 — Incitement of the army and creation of contradictions between the army and the national-guard.

8 — Hesitation of the national leadership in taking decisive measures in time.

9 — Non-implementation of great revolutionary accomplishments.

The Report Produced a Statement from the General Leadership of the National-Guard and a statement from the Investigation Office.

The Report attacked party blocs and the party's seeking aid from a bloc against the other. Ali Saleh Al-Sa'adi group, the report stated, and his seeking aid from certain national guards leaderships for

protecting his group, besides the group of Talib Eshbieb and Hazem Jawad who sought aid from party and non-party elements in the army. All the foregoing caused division and provided an opportunity to the party's enemies to complete their reactionary conspiracy on November 18.

The Congress approved the report and annexed thereto recommendations for the carrying out of studies concerning the impact of Petroleum monopolies; activities of the reactionaries, and the secessionist movement of Barazani in the Iraqi set-back.

The Congress also gave recommendations for the carrying out of extensive studies regarding the social, economic and political situation.

The Ideological Report

A prolonged Ideological Report was submitted to the Congress. This report analysed the active forces in the Arab society and the link between the national and class struggle. It also discussed Unity Liberty and Socialism and outlined the relation of same to the conflicting social forces.

The report analysed the former Union and the factors that led to its reverse with explanatory note on the ways and means for the realization of such Union.

The Congress issued a decision instructing the new national leadership to study the ideological report of the sixth congress namely the « Basic Theories », the new Ideological Report, Ideological Committee's recommendations, deliberations and recommendations contributed by comrades at the 8th National Congress and to complete all in a unified report to be submitted to a forthcoming national congress provided the « Basic Theories » shall be considered as the basis upon which the party shall depend till the holding of that forthcoming congress.

The Congress also endorsed a recommendation directing the new national leadership to reconsider the party's constitution in a manner suited to the stage now being passed by the party while it carries out the social conversion and the struggle for union.

The national leadership was also instructed to draw up a historical data about the party and submit same to the forthcoming congress.

Organizational and Internal Structure

The Congress conducted debates on the organizational situation of the party and adopted a number of recommendations related to organization and problems that confront it. The Congress approved a

recommendation to the effect that the forthcoming leadership shall establish a higher-party-school for National Socialist Studies. Important amendments were introduced into the internal procedural system at the congress. In the forefront of these amendments :-

A — Making the party training term for higher leaderships two years.

B — Establishment of a national advisory-council composed of members from the national leadership and party representatives from Arab countries so that this council might act as a link between the leadership and the various party branches and exchange viewpoints on party affairs.

The Congress also issued some resolutions that strengthen powers of the secretary general in supervising and controlling organizations of the party.

The Political Report

The national leadership submitted to the Congress a lengthy political report in three parts. First part dealt with the most important cases that occurred in the period between the two congresses. The second part stated the present realities which the party faces. The third part outlined the bases and plans to be practised by the party in the forthcoming stage.

The first part included a chapter dealing with the summit conference and the reasons that called for holding such conference consequent to the Zionist aggressive initiation of River-Jordan waters' diversion.

The political report of the national leadership brought into focus the party's anxiety over the summit conference's possible change into an operation aimed at the liquidation of Palestine problem or the direction of its activities to the question of River-Jordan tributaries only; instead of discussing the whole Palestinian question and the liberation of Palestine.

The party, in view of the foregoing, had participated in the Arab summit conferences with a plan aiming at turning the Arab strategy from the defensive routine to offensive strategy that includes a comprehensive and detailed plan aimed at the liberation of Palestine. The party also aimed at making all Arab states participate in bearing the burden of liberation besides the creation of a revolutionary Palestinian organization to sponsor the liberation battle by organizing the Arab people of Palestine; coordinating and unifying their efforts and thus prevent the turning of Palestine cause from a « Liberation » cause to a « Diversion » cause only.

The party succeeded, especially at the second

summit conference, in realizing much of its objectives, despite the opposition it had preliminarilt confronted.

This part of the report studied relations between the ruling party in Arab Syria and the various Arab movements and Arab states. then it made reference to the relations between the party and the Socialist Bloc, mentioning the deterioration of these relations at the beginning and improvement of the same later on, especially when decisions on Socialist diversion were issued.

The report brought into focus also relations of Arab Syria with the non-aligned governments and explained the party's failure to strengthen those relations as owing to the party's occupation with internal affairs.

The second part of the report analysed realities that prevail in the Western and Eastern blocs besides divisions that exist between both blocs.

Same part of the report stated realities that exist in the non-aligned states and present realities in the Arab world. It also made a reference to the disappearance of revolutionary monopoly and the weakness of mass-movements in a number of countries where reactionary regimes prevail.

The report also mentioned progressive forces'

engagement in side issues and analysed the situations of organizations that have a national nature. The report then embarked on analysing the realities that prevail in the Arab countries.

The third part of the report which deal with the basic principles, and the principles to guide the party and the regime in the forthcoming stage; started with an introduction where in it stated « The party's attainment of government in Arab Syria has created new circumstances that impose new strategy; not only in view of the party's take over of government and the increase in its power possibilities but also of the party's activities that reflect on government and the impact of government on the party. The third part added « whereas government is the party's government, it is the assumption then, that any action that emanates from the government is considered as coming from the party and that any stand by the party is considered as taken by the government, even if such a stand was not initiated by the government ».

« Two tendencies are fraught with danger to a revolutionary party when it assumes power : the theoretical tendency which does not take into consideration changes of conditions resulting from the party's assumption of power and which continues the principles and logic of the stage of passive

struggle. The other tendency is that of adopting an attitude based on exclusively practical considerations. The second of these two tendencies is less of a danger to our Party because, as a national Arab party, it is inevitably concerned with the problems of the entire Arab world with no exception.

With regard to the strategy of action, the Report says :

1 — Freeing Party from Encirclement :

All the forces opposed to our Party, though contradictory and not united with one another, meet in efforts aimed at restricting the possibilities of the Party's enlargement and extension and at keeping the Party's present ruling experience limited to a Syrian experience.

To defeat encirclement the Report Suggests :

- (1) Participation in international conferences.
- (2) Exchanging visits with representatives of liberation movements in Asia and Africa and of a number of socialist and communist parties.
- (3) Extending professional contacts on Arab and international levels.
- (4) Endeavouring to create an Afro - Asian Socialist federation.
- (5) Entrusting the new National Leadership with

the task of deciding on the plan and execution of the proposed project.

2 — One Front

The party, in its capacity as the national party that extends throughout the Arab world and encounters many foes who sometimes reach contradiction, inspires basic principles in its stands :

1 — The party would not support a reactionary movement against a progressive movement or a secessionist movement against a movement of national nature.

2 — On assessment of any situation, requirements of the Palestine case take first place.

3 — The final practical outcome of any assumed stand should serve interests of the progressive forces and not reactionary inclinations and tendencies.

4 — Contradictions between phase-targets and tactical considerations should be avoided.

3 — Binding Commitment Towards the Liberation of Palestine :

The Palestine question is a fundamental starting-point for the party's policy and its working

plan on the governmental and non-governmental levels. All other bases and principles stated in the report are subject to this logic and moulded by it. Palestine is more important than any other national case owing to its impact on the national destiny which exceeds the impact of any other problem that confronts the Arabs and the party. The existence of Israel means that any Arab objective shall not be permitted to be wholly accomplished and that commitment towards Palestine means its liberation. The former stand thus completely differs from the official stand of the Arab League and the Arab states at the United Nations where a demand for implementation of the partition plan was forwarded.

The giving of priority to the liberation of Palestine means that our international and Arab policy are shaped in the light of attitudes taken by foreign governments and Arab states as well with regard to the cause of liberation. It also means our preparedness to freeze any battle on the Arab-level to the extent to which it could be frozen and meet with any other Arab country which is actually willing to support an offensive strategy.

4 — The Non-Alignment Practical Scheme

The sixth national congress preferred the expression « non-alignment » against the expression

« Positive neutrality » which the party had at first devised.

In our capacity as a national movement we support the liberation seeking movements. As a socialist movement we naturally incline to Socialist movements even if there are differences on a number of stands and contentions, while these differences keep us in one framework against capitalist systems.

We are neither neutral in the strife between liberation and colonialism nor the strife between socialism and capitalism we find contrast in the claim of some European parties who while claiming socialism stick to the colonial capitalist bloc. (disregarding that some of these parties play a leading role in this bloc).

With our giving due care to the refusal of axis policies and adherence besides our encouragement to the non-alignment policy, our relations as a party aim naturally at improvement of our relations with parties and regimes that share with us same objectives and meet with us in the strife against all forms of exploitation besides their participation with us in the realization of a socialist society.

5 — Our Stand regarding the Western Capitalist Bloc

Many and important contrasts exist between us

and the Western capitalist bloc.

In addition to the basic contradiction between our movement and the capitalist systems, position of the Arab world within the area of Western influence has made our political and economic strife concentrate with the West.

The West is not an ideological enemy only, but also a political and economic one with whom we clash in every case concerning liberty.

But on the other hand the West, which appears to form a unit on the ideological level, is actually overrun with contradictions and torn up with disputes on the political level. Therefore, in deciding our political attitude toward the West we must set forth from three main considerations :

1 — The inherent ideological contradiction between any socialist movement and the capitalist system;

2 — The Palestine issue and the role played principally by the West in perpetuating it;

3 — The presence of significant contradictions among the various Western powers and particularly those between France and the United States.

On the basis of these considerations our relations with the various Western powers must be built

up in the light of the measure of their threat and antagonism to our national liberation movements and trends.

But it is obvious also that any belief on our part in the possibility of changing Western policy toward our national issues and particularly that of Palestine by means of persuasion is a dangerously naive and mistaken belief. It is true that we may succeed in causing a split in the West with respect to certain liberation causes but as far as the Palestine cause is concerned it will certainly remain one of the major points of consonance among all Western powers without exception; so in determining our relations with the West we cannot possibly overlook the inconceivability of winning the West over to our national stand on this fundamental question.

6 — Our Attitude Toward the Socialist Camp

The party's attitude toward the countries of the socialist camp must necessarily stem from two main considerations (1 that ours is a Socialist movement; and (2 that it is a movement for national liberation.

The Socialist camp, particularly after Stalin's death, has taken a friendly attitude in support of socialist and national liberation movements all over

the world, and we on our part and in spite of our attachment to the principle of non-alignment cannot but appreciate and encourage all such genial acts of friendship and good understanding.

The socialist camp may be said to form a kind of unity with relation to the West but to consider it as forming a unity in itself would be a short-sighted blunder overlooking the fact that the countries of the socialist camp are becoming more and more heterogeneous and distinguishable in their systems from that of the Soviet Union. Our general attitude to the socialist camp as a whole will not therefore exclude the need to adopt a definite position toward each one of its states on the actual political level, neither on the other hand would it be advisable for the party to confine its relations and studies to the socialist camp countries and their experiments in government.

7 — Our Attitude Toward the Countries of the Third Bloc

The line adopted by our party toward the Third Bloc countries has made itself felt exclusively and mainly in the realm of theory. It is regrettable that the relations of both the party and the state with this immense human bloc are still negligible despite the great ideological importance the party

attached to it in all its congresses and reports.

An earnest effort with regard to this bloc is urgently required on two levels :

- (a) The diplomatic and economic level;
- (b) The popular and party level.

The party-level effort must moreover be centered upon those African countries in which Israel has shown an alarming degree of activity. The purpose of such proposed efforts should be the liquidation of any Israeli influence in those parts of Africa which enjoy progressive systems of government and especially Guinea, Ghana, Maly, Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania. The ousting of Israel for good from the liberated African countries would be achieved by making the Africans see for themselves the kind of relation linking Israel with Western imperialism. Once the Africans are made to conceive this link between Israel and imperialism the battle against Israel will become to them part and parcel of their battle for national liberation.

As for Asia a concentrated effort may prove fruitful in several of its countries.

As far as countries with traditional systems of government or those linked with the West on subservient terms there are two scopes for combatting Israeli influence in them :

1 — The economic scope, by establishing powerful companies that are financed by members of the Arab communities abroad and by a number of Arab governments;

2 — The cultural and religious scope where it will be imperative to make use of the spread of Islam in a great many African and Asian regions, as its spread there provides a most propitious climate for Arab national causes and especially as far as the confrontation of Israel is concerned.

This kind of policy calls, however, for the coordination of efforts among a number of Arab countries. Such coordination may prove to be greatly effective if it covers the field of diplomatic representation.

The Economic Report

The National Leadership has presented to the party Congress an elaborate economic report on the experiment of socialist transformation in Syria with a comparative study of this experiment with experiments of similar nature in other countries and an analysis of the meaning of democratic administration in socialist practice.

The report also discusses the economic unity agreement, the Arab common market agreement and the Arab Petroleum question.

The Congress discussed the report and arrived at a number of recommendations which may be summed up as follows :

First : On Socialist Transformation

1 — The Eighth National Congress observes that the party has covered a considerable distance in the way of implementing the socialist transformation program as approved by the Sixth National Congress

The Eighth National Congress sees the necessity of consolidating the said socialist steps by means of such immediate and long-term measures as would insure the successful and sound fulfilment of their objectives. This entails the responsibility of perseverent work and untiring constructive efforts on the part of both the state and the party with a view to finding out the most practical and effective means which would guarantee a sound socialist transformation with the least possible costs of material and manpower resources and with a view to paving the way for further revolutionary measures in this direction. The leading party and government authorities will have also to make a realistic analysis of the actual economic conditions and needs of the country and decide their solutions in the light of such analysis.

The Eighth Party Congress thus draws attention

to the dangers of hesitation, weakness and pressure which the reactionary circles try to impose upon the government and the revolution. At the same time it strongly censures and draws attention to the dangers of dogmatic ossification unstudied solutions, blind imitation and the pseudo-leftist way of political auctioneering which sets forth not so much from a real knowledge and understanding of the actual circumstances in their true light and dimensions as from factors of ignorance, opportunism or rash behaviour. In other words, the eighth party congress insists on rejecting ready-made solutions which do not suit the actual and objective conditions of our country and national economy.

2 — The Eighth National Congress believes that the socialist conversion measures taken by the Party in Syria require support and backing in all fields. Unless a deep-rooted cultural change, conducive to the creation of a public opinion that understands and supports socialism is effected, the socialist revolution in the economic field remains shaky and uncertain. The Congress considers bureaucracacy a great danger to socialist conversion inasmuch as it leads to routine administration and an inflation of the administrative machinery which consume a great part of the economic potential earmarked for economic development.

3 — The Eighth National Congress emphasizes the need for effecting a radical change in the administration of the « Public Sector » which would ensure the existence of democratic relations in the nationalized establishments, would give workers the opportunity of participating in running these establishments in a democratic manner, and would evince voluntary contribution by the toiling masses in national economy as well as would develop the possibilities and abilities of the toiling class on the following bases :

(A) Ensuring a workers' democracy from the bottom to the top.

(B) Preparing a comprehensive and central planning of the « Public Sector ».

(C) Finding practical formulas, which are realistic flexible and capable of execution and adjustment in the light of general conditions.

The Eighth National Congress proposes changing the expression « auto-gestion » to « democratic administration » inasmuch as the latter expression is more exactly descriptive of the desired democratic nature of the administration.

The Congress further advocates linking labour with production and income and linking factory

with society, as such association forms one of the bases of democratic management.

4 — The Eighth Party Congress urges that the necessary studies should be carried out with a view to extending medical services to the largest possible sections of the masses of the people.

5 — As the party's point of departure is basically a national one, its eighth Congress is convinced that the Arab experiment in socialism and socialist practice will not assume its true proportions and dimensions if it restricts itself to the limits of one particular country and will only do so if it proceeds on the national line, setting as its target the socialist transformation of the entire Arab homeland.

Second : On Economic Unity and the Arab Common Market

1 — The success or failure of the Arab common market and economic unity depends in the first place upon the contradictory political and social conditions of the Arab homeland. Unless national consciousness becomes deeply rooted in the masses of the Arab people to express itself strongly and effectively as a unified dynamic force and unless such economic schemes as those of economic unity and the Arab common market assume the force of a national slogan that can stir the masses and fill them

with sufficient enthusiasm to make them go down to the street to voice their will and declare their readiness to fight for its sake, these schemes though they form a basic step toward Arab unity will remain far from workable and serving only for propaganda and as a stupefying dope that would ultimately drive the masses to despondency and despair with regard to the feasibility of Arab unity as a serious objective.

2 — As our party exists in the various Arab countries and truly represents the unity of Arab struggle and the faithful vanguard of the cause of Arab unity it has become incumbent upon it to undertake the task of mobilizing the Arab masses to exert their pressure on Arab rulers and pressure them to carry out the necessary serious steps toward economic unity and the Arab common market.

3 — The Eight Party Congress is convinced that any Arab state which joins the European common market would, by doing this, be helping the economic scheme of imperialism and Zionism. Therefore it falls upon the party to explain the truth of the matter to the people with all possible means.

Third : The Arab Petroleum Question

1 — The Eighth Party Congress is convinced that the ultimate aim of any Arab petroleum policy

should be the nationalization of Arab petroleum and the establishment of a unified Arab petroleum organization which would undertake the production, transport, refining and marketing of Arab petroleum and which would organize relations directly and on sound commercial bases with the consuming countries. This target forms part of the Arab revolutionary strategy which aims at liberating the Arab homeland from imperialism and neo-imperialism and at liquidating the reactionary systems which are subservient to it and subsequently at realizing Arab national aims.

2 — Meanwhile and until this national slogan with respect to Arab petroleum is put into effect the Congress considers it essential, and particularly now that the petroleum production and distribution industry has been nationalized in Syria, to move national consciousness and polarise the masses' struggle round a multi-phase program which would aim **firstly** at using part of Arab petroleum revenue in a joint fund for development and armament purposes, and **secondly** at reconsidering the relations of the Arab countries with the foreign powers (in respect to petroleum affairs in the light of those powers' relations with Israel.

Fourth : Arab Economy and Israel

As Israel forms a bridge which imperialism

uses in exploiting the entire Arab area and whose very presence in the heart of the Arab homeland calls for a heavy and constant drain on the resources of the national economy in order to cover military expenses and such expenses as are needed for anti-Zionist propaganda and for the boycott of Israel and also calls for the military recruitment of the nation's potential manpower to the detriment of economic development schemes in those countries which are directly exposed to the Israeli threat, the Eighth Party Congress believes :

1 — That the question of Arab petroleum investment is inseparable from the Palestine question for it is evident that Israel whose economy is organically linked with Western economy draws part of its strength at least, though indirectly, from Arab petroleum investments, hence the imperativeness of kindling the fire of national struggle for giving effect to the slogan of « Petroleum of the Arabs should Serve the Arabs ».

2 — That it is most important to treat all foreign powers in the light of their respective attitudes to the Palestine question and to boycott any country that supplies Israel with arms and economic aid and also to impose a strict boycott upon all firms and institutions that deal with it.

3 — That it will be the duty of our party to

raise further the level of national consciousness and stimulate the Arab masses to struggle for the utilization of Arab economic resources, and especially petroleum, in tightening the rope round Israel's neck, and also to unmask to the Arab masses the truth about those Arab double-dealing rulers who are trading in, and traying to liquidate, the Palestine issue.

The Palestine Report

The Palestine Committee has presented its report on the Palestine question to the Congress, which discussed and adopted a number of resolution based on the following principles :

1 — On the international level, Arab policy has so far dealt with the Palestine question from a point of view which virtually amounts to an implicit recongnition of the state of Israel by its insistance on implementing the United Nations resolutions on Palestine. The Eighth Party Congress, however, rejects such an approach to the Palestin question and considers that Arab political strategy should set forth from the point of absolute rejection of Israel's existence because it is contradictory with Arab existence.

2 — The palestine question must serve as a measure to determine the relations of the Arab

countries with others on all political and economic levels.

3 — The Palestinian Arab people should have the right to be the first and foremost instrument of the liberation of Palestine, for which purpose they must first be organized and freed from all restrictions that stand in the way of their march toward this goal.

The Congress then recommended that the next National Leadership should carry out a deep and comprehensive study of the Palestine question and draw up a clear strategy of it which should be based on the foregoing points.

Report on the Experiment of Government in Syria

The Congress discussed a report entitled « The Experiment of Government in Syria » and comprising a brief survey of the political situation during the « Secession regime ». The Congress then studied also in brief the most important problems which stood in the way of the Revolution in the fields of policies, government organization, and relations among the various revolutionary organs.

The report summed up the political, social and economic conditions under the (secessionist regime) in Syria as follows :

When the role of the masses as protectors of the Union and of the revolutionary vanguard as its leaders was brought to an end by those controlling the Union, the existence of the Union was foredoomed. In fact the Union was a revolution which could be protected only by an organization of the masses which is genuine and natural rather than faked and artificial. It was, therefore, bound to collapse and with it collapsed the revolutionary measures taken without the support of the masses.

Because the Union was a revolution, it evinced a counter revolution in which the reactionaries and the capitalists whose interests are opposed to those of the toiling masses aimed to reestablish (Secession , exploitation and the allied interests of the bourgeois class. The (Secessionists) repealed nationalisation laws, played around with Agrarian Reform, confirmed the spirit of (Separation and concluded agreements aimed at confirming the entities of dismemberment.

The Secessionist spirit was reflected in the actions of politicians and rulers. A reactionary, bourgeois, secessionist and anti-Arab alliance was concluded among the groups opposed to the Arab masses and theories were developed in praise of the artificial creations and entities.

The report analysed the attitude of the masses

to our party during the period of (Secession). It described the distribution of the various political tendencies in the army groups and blocs and the basic role played by the Baath military group in destroying (Secession). It also described the effect of the Ramadan Revolution in producing the March Revolution and the new conditions favourable to the establishment of a Union among the three countries of Syria Egypt and Iraq. The Congress studied in brief the 17th - of - April convention (1963), its drawbacks, the spirit with which it was drawn up and the political forces which led to miscarriage as a result of their attempts to swoop down upon the party and overthrow it from power despite its earnest endeavours to enter into a popular front with those forces on the principle of equal representation between the party and all the other forces, a principle which was actually put into practice during the time of the first cabinet and within the National Council.

The report then analyses the conditions which, after the 18th - of - July plot, led the party to seize all authority to itself and the fundamental task, which it undertook to carry out, such as those of solving the contradictions which existed among the various classes of the people, saving the country's economic situation by means of a revolutionary program, re-building the army on an ideological basis

and free it from the adventurist and power-greedy mentality, restoring a sense of stability and security among citizens and presenting them with a picture of the future through a clearly drawn up socialist democratic program, and determining its bearings with relation to other political movements.

The report then speaks about the steps taken by the Revolution in dealing with such issues as : The Workers and the Revolution, the peasants and the Revolution, the small merchants and the Revolution, and socialist transformation and the basic conditions that must be fulfilled to insure its success.

The report then turns to study the provisional constitution and the new principles which have been introduced into its main structure with a special emphasis on the Revolution's attitude toward public freedoms and the duty of safeguarding them within the limits of the national well being and without infringing on the revolutionary institutions.

The report then sums up the Revolution's experiment in the « form of government » which should be based on a collectivism in command and a centralism in authority, these being the two fundamental guarantees for the consolidation, and development of the Revolution.

The Congress discussed the party's relation with

the state and the relations of the various organs with each other, guided by the resolutions of the Sixth Party Congress and in the light of practical experience. The Congress arrived at a number of resolutions in this connection based upon certain fundamental principles. The said resolutions set forth the jurisdictions of each of the party's leaderships, their relations with each other and with the state and also adopted a number of resolutions with respect to the relations between the party's civil and military organs.

The fundamental principles are as follows :

1 — All authority lies in the hand of the party and all that the government undertakes to do in the way of planning or execution is undertaken in the name of the party and in implementation of its policy, principles and schemes.

2 — Wherever the party is in power it shall be practically represented in the organization of the masses, an ideologically organized army and a ruling authority.

3 — The party is the basis from which these three institutions take their course and which links them together and decides their relations to each other.

4 — The « popular masses organization » shall be the field of activity of the party's non-military organs, and should be responsible for supervising activities of the masses and spreading consciousness among the people.

5 — The function of the ideological army shall be to protect the country from foreign aggression and the Revolution from its enemies, while the function of the party organs, within the army, shall be the indoctrination of the army with the ideological spirit and edifying it in a manner agreeing with the party's plan and schemes.

6 — Government is the form which the party in power assumes, the government's function being to carry out the party's programs and translate them into laws and practices in the country which it rules.

The party's supreme leaderships shall be unified within these three institutions, the authority of none of which shall be allowed to transcend the natural limits of its own domain. Thus party organs have no business within the scope of their day-to-day activity to meddle in state affairs, though the party as represented in its congresses and supreme leadership shall have the power to superintend state affairs and to plan and guide the course of those affairs; in like manner, no branch leaderships

shall be allowed to exercise any authority on state administrations in their areas except through the channel of their respective branch leadership; neither shall the government on the other hand have the right to interfere in, or exercise its authority and control over, the party's activities, in view of the fact that it is the government that stems up from the party and not the other way round.

However, it will be imperative to create and encourage the spirit of cooperation between the two organs in their rank - and file bases.

On the other hand, the army should not interfere in daily state affairs except to the extent of what pertains to it and enters under its jurisdiction, neither should it interfere in the affairs of the party whose members should also abstain from interfering in the affairs of the army except through the proper channels of their respective leaderships.

After discussing in detail the jurisdictions of the party's national and country-level leaderships with respect to their duties in guiding the government and carrying out the policy of the party, the resolutions turn to the relation of the party organ, inside the army, with the civil organ and draw up a general principle which runs as follows :

The army shall be an ideological revolutionary

army, welded completely to the party and performing the basic task of rendering protection to the Revolution from its enemies at home and abroad and pushing it forward to realize its aims, with the party organ functioning inside this army as its vanguard. This will therefore call for continuous endeavours to find such working formulas as would help the continuance of cooperation between the party branch of the army and the civil branch in drawing up and implementing the policy of the party. Moreover, military and leading elements in the army should be allowed to take part in bearing the responsibilities of key positions on party and government levels provided they devote themselves completely to such responsibilities.

In the meanwhile, however, and until this objective is fully attained the Congress has drawn up a mid-way formula to serve as a kind of compromise between the actual state of affairs and the target in view, and decided that the « Country - Level » leadership should exercise its jurisdictions in guiding the army and leading the party organ in it through the channel of a military bureau subordinate to and appointed by the Country-Level leadership, whose military members shall also appoint the secretary of this bureau.

The National Leadership Elections

Just before the meeting of the Eighth Party Congress, the party's secretary-general comrade Michel Aflag announced his reluctance to nominate himself for the new National Leadership. He summoned comrade Mounif Razzaz to him and urged him to succeed him as secretary - general of the party and assured him of his full confidence in him.

During the elections session the delegates nominated comrade Michel Aflag for the secretariat-general of the party but he insisted that he should be excused and said in a long speech that this stand of his should be regarded as a reminder to the party comrades of their responsibilities toward the future of their party. Once again he insisted to be excused when comrade Mounif Razzaz requested him in a touching speech to recall his decision. Upon this the Congress voted on a motion which ruled that the question of comrade Aflag's nomination should be left entirely in the hands of the Congress which thereupon elected him to the new national leadership.

The National Leadership met afterwards to elect a secretary-general for the party. Comrade Michel Aflag insisted to give up his post as secretary general, nominating for it comrade Mounif Razzaz. In a speech given by comrade Aflag on the occasion he said, « I nominate for the secretariat general

comrade Mounif Razzaz whom the party has known as a stubborn and patient fighter, and as a profound thinker who has also distinguished himself for outstanding honesty and a straight-forward of character. I do therefore hope that the comrades will agree to grant him their confidence as I have ganted him mine and let us hope that his term of office will be one of good and productive work which would continicusly bring this party nearer to its objectives ».

Comrade Mounif Razzaz gave his assent in response to comrade Aflag's insistence and said in an address to the Congress « I shall always be proud of this confidence which comrade Michel Aflag has so kindly grnated me, and I shall continue to emphasize that my faith in him will continue to be the guide which will direct me on my way, and I hope that his trust will not be misplaced. It was comrade Aflag who founded this party; it was he who has led it and accompanied its growth during all these years, and it is he who shall always remain in our hearts the real leader of the party whatever changes may take place in the names of posts and responsibilities ».

Comrade Dr. Mounif Razzaz was then unanimously elected as secretary - general of the party. A debate followed on whether comrade Michel Aflag

should be named chairman or leader of the party and it was decided - despite his objection - to name him the founder and leader of the party.

Conclusion

The Eighth Party Congress has proved itself to be one of the active and productive congresses that the party has ever witnessed. For besides these resolutions which have been announced there have been other resolutions which it has been decided in the public interest not to make public but which will be put to effect in the nearest possible future.

The Ba'ath Arab Socialist party pledges itself before the Arab people everywhere that it will continue to wage a fight against the forces of imperialism, the forces of reaction and backwardness, and the forces of opportunism and deceit in order to fulfil the people's aspirations for Unity, Liberty and Socialism.

Damascus, 4 May 1965.

The National Leadership

